

— The New Swirled Order — UK CROP CIRCLES OF 1998

It's been another exhilarating season for crop circles in England, but these awe-inspiring formations still defy explanation.

A compilation of reports
by **Marcus Allen** © 1998
NEXUS Magazine, UK
and
by **Colin Andrews** © 1998
CPR International, USA

Crop circle enthusiast Marcus Allen, of NEXUS Magazine's UK Office, has filed the following report on the 1998 crop circle season. — Ed.

Do you believe that all crop circles are man-made? Do you believe that no crop circles are man-made? Most people who are asked these questions invariably answer "No" to both—which can only mean that a phenomenon exists. In 1998, crop circles have continued to appear as prolifically as in past years, intriguing the thousands of visitors to southern England where the majority of formations occur.

Reports and photographs of crop circles from Belgium, Canada, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Holland, Israel and the USA have been received and are regularly updated on the Crop Circle Connector website, <www.cropcircleconnector.com>. They indicate just how widespread the phenomenon has become.

The first major formation in England in 1998 appeared between 12 midnight and 2 am on Monday 4 May. The Beltane Wheel measured over 180 feet across, consisted of 33 segments, and lay in a field of oilseed rape—a brittle and easily damaged plant about four feet high. The timing of its appearance is known because a local photographer had set up his cameras to photograph the Moon and the following sunrise overlooking this field. He would have been aware of other people nearby, but no one else was there.

Lying within sight of Silbury Hill and easily visible from the busy A4 (London to Bristol road) the formation immediately attracted press and TV interest. However, the sceptical camera crew were unable to explain why their usually reliable equipment became progressively non-functional inside the circle.

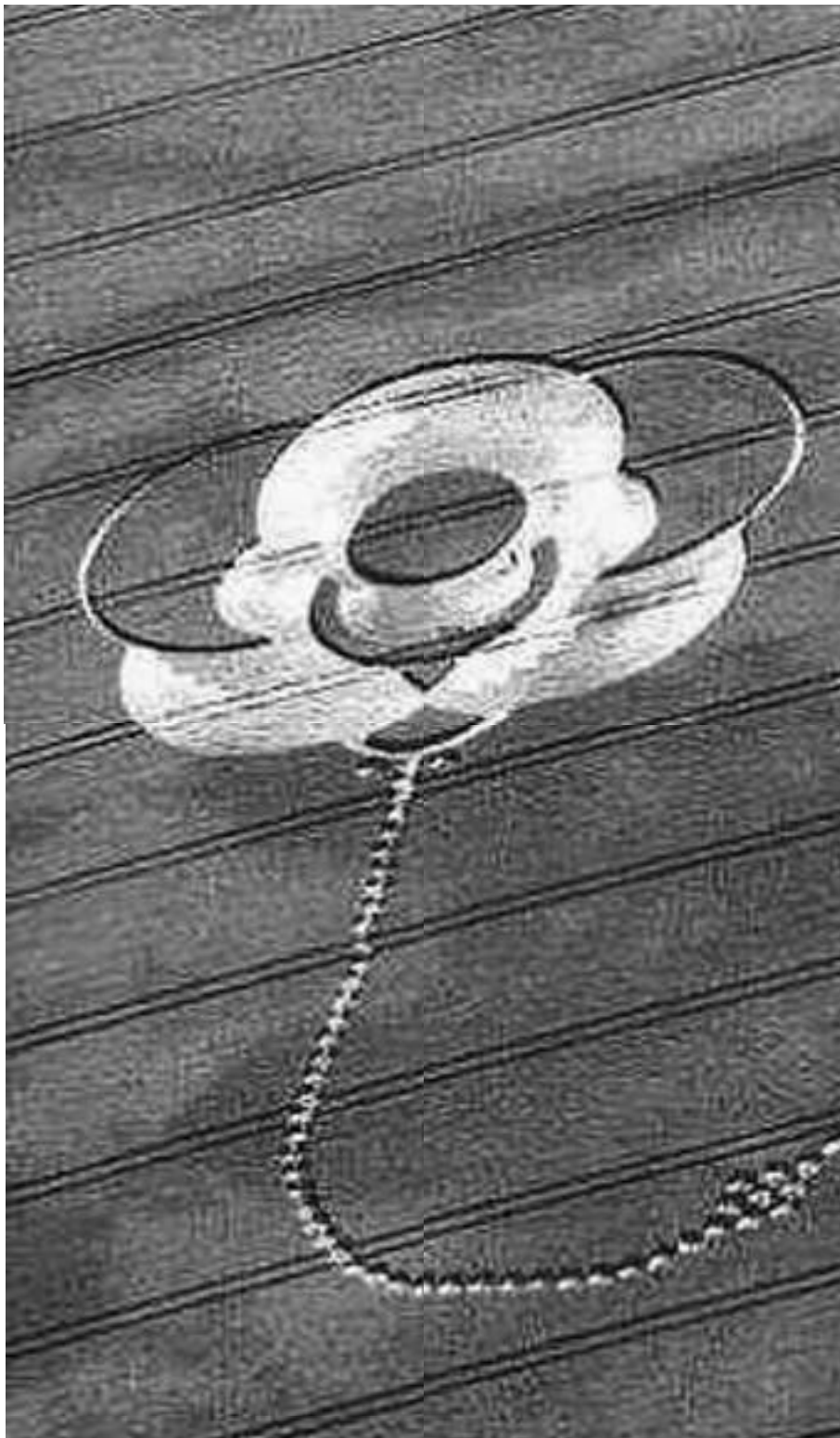
The geometry of the Beltane Wheel also received attention, as 33 divisions of a circle is not an obvious number to lay out. Each segment appeared to be part of three interlocking circles. The design is hard enough to create on paper, let alone on a sloping field in darkness. The formation is baffling.

The English summer is usually notable for two things: little sunshine and few hours of darkness; six at most. As in previous years, new formations were now appearing nearly every night, with as many as two and three each night during July and August. More than 150 crop circles in England in four months this year—much the same as in each of the previous 10 years—cannot be dismissed as the nocturnal antics of a few pranksters, despite the dour insistence of some trying to explain away this most visible phenomenon.

This very visual aspect has attracted the attention of TV networks this year. NBC, filming in New Zealand, and the BBC and ITV in Britain have all commissioned the same few people to perform for their cameras—the results being loudly proclaimed as the explanation we've all been waiting for. Compared to the full range of crop circles, and with now over 3,000 documented worldwide, their efforts appeared laboured, stunted and lacking in creativity. They took many hours to complete their designs, and even needed the help of floodlights in some cases.

Whatever explanations are considered for how crop circles are formed, and there are many, it seems they may not be so relevant, for it is the effect these extraordinary shapes have on people which is the true measure of their significance. Lives really have been changed, and new and more productive life-paths seem to have arisen from involvement with crop circle research.

This became increasingly evident at the two major crop circle events this summer. The Crop Circle Celebration weekend, organised by Francine Blake and the Wiltshire Studies



Beckhampton, near Avebury, Wiltshire. Reported 21 July. The body is 200 feet wide, and the tail, consisting of 52 circles, is over 300 feet if straightened. Photograph © 1998 Lucy Pringle.

Group, was held at Alton Barnes, Wiltshire, on 18–19 July. Attracting more people than ever, two large marquees for food and stalls were needed in addition to the famous Coronation Hall. An international group of 14 speakers presented a wide range of subjects—linked, as always, to the impact crop circles have had on their research.

coach tour of the formations and a full day's lectures for the many left behind, this event attracted attendees from across America and Europe, with some from South Africa and Australia. Those of us living in England really only appreciate how fortunate we are when we meet enthusiasts who have travelled so far to visit the crop circles.

Andy Thomas's informative and entertaining overview of details noted in crop circles and his unique slide show of formations recorded during the past 10 years were useful, as always, in reminding people just how extensive this phenomenon actually is and how little we really know about it yet. Andy's new book, *Vital Signs* (see review this issue), was also launched at this weekend. Its subtitle accurately sums up its purpose: "A Complete Guide to the Crop Circle Mystery and why it is NOT a Hoax".

Michael Glickman, over from California, showed in his own inimitable style the increasingly sophisticated geometry identifiable in crop circles.

Dr Chet Snow linked the Hopi and Maya prophecies and his own Earth changes predictions with the symbolism of the English crop circles.

Kurt Browne presented material on African spiritual tradition and the Kabbalah, showing how humanity's search for wisdom and truth can only benefit from contact with such apparently diverse sources.

A few days before the celebration weekend in 1997, as if in some sort of acknowledgement the circle-makers produced one of last year's highlights: the 12 Torus rings. For 1998 they did not disappoint.

In East Field on 9 July, for the first time ever there appeared a seven-sided formation, 300 feet across and surrounded by nearly 100 smaller circles. The huge, flattened area was laid down in a flowing pattern, only fully appreciable from the air.

In another first this year, many visitors were able to take advantage of a local helicopter service to view the area's formations. It was in this formation that Rod Bearcloud Berry, from the Native American Osage tribe, held the dramatic closing ceremony of the weekend which, for many, highlighted the ongoing spiritual connection felt by people drawn to experience the mysteries surrounding crop circles.

The following weekend, 24–26 July, saw the 9th Glastonbury Symposium: "Investigating Crop Circles and Signs of Our Times", held in the recently refurbished Assembly Rooms. Roland and Clare Pargeter organised what many attendees agreed was the best symposium so far. Starting on the Friday with an 80-person

With over 20 speakers scheduled over the three days, the program was kept on course by Roland's gentle authority. Brian O'Leary—and his Lapis Pig (you had to be there!)—gave an ex-astronaut's view of just how far some researchers are challenging existing paradigms. David Kingston showed remarkable video footage of a UFO over Dorset, England. Peter Paget warned of the dangers ahead if we do not become more aware of the potential chaos from the so-called Millennium Bug. Lynn Picknett and Clive Prince revealed their groundbreaking research into St John the Baptist whose influence has been suppressed for so long but is now being reassessed.

With many speakers of course talking about crop circles, and with the blending of various apparently unconnected subjects—all concentrated within the unique atmosphere of Glastonbury—this symposium ended with the realisation for many that the jigsaw is taking shape, pieces are fitting together and a bigger picture is emerging. Crop circles are the catalysts.

As if emboldened by the attention, the circle-makers (whatever their origin) completed the season with a sustained high level of spectacular formations through to the end of August. Some of these were cut down by combine harvesters within hours of their appearance, but not before photos could be taken—now the only evidence that these formations ever existed.

There may never be a definitive answer to the often asked question, "What do they mean?" If you have to ask the question, you would probably not appreciate the answer because it would be someone else's answer. Perhaps there is not meant to be an answer, because crop circles may not mean anything except what each person wants them to mean.

To find out that there truly is 'magic in the fields', do try to visit at least one crop circle before you depart Planet Earth.

Note: Marcus Allen can be contacted at the NEXUS UK Office, 55 Queens Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex RH19 1BG, tel +44 (0)1342 322854, fax +44 (0)1342 324574.

The following report, dated 11 July 1998, is from well-known crop circle researcher Colin Andrews, and was downloaded from the Crop Circle Connector website <www.cropcircleconnector.com>.

It has been many years since I've heard so many UFO reports while researching the ever mysterious crop circles. These past 48 hours have been exceptional for the sheer quantity and strangeness of the reports.

On Thursday 9 July, at around 7 am, the first report was received from Alton Barnes, Wiltshire, of an enormous new crop circle design in a field which has seen many—East Field, below the ancient burial tumulus called Adam's Grave. The design was a Koch fractal snowflake pattern, like two others seen nearby dur-

ing 1997. This one had over 140 small circles surrounding the snowflake outline and was around 300 feet across [see photograph below].

At approx. 11 pm on the same night of discovery, numerous army helicopters were witnessed sweeping the area, as if they were searching for something. Oddly, though, some had their light beacons turned off while another was flying with a very powerful searchlight scanning the ground. Then suddenly, many witnesses (I have spoken to three of them) saw an illuminated sphere being chased by one of the army helicopters. The helicopter scanned its searchlight onto some of the researchers, as this chase took place across fields from Adam's Grave to the far side of East Field. This is the same field that many viewers of *Strange Universe* and *Sightings* TV programs would have seen in the film of two British Army helicopters hovering over a small glistening ball three years ago.

Around two hours before this apparent UFO chase took place, farmer Terry Butcher was out on his farm to the south, also in Wiltshire, when he witnessed a large tube open up the clouds. He described the clouds opening from high level to the lowest clouds in a straight line with two straight edges. He said it was like a long tube, inside which there was no cloud. Within just moments, the clouds filled back in and everything returned to normal.

Last night (10–11 July), literally thousands of telephone calls were received from Scotland and down the Welsh coast to Cornwall, south-west England. People reported to police stations and coastguards that they had seen numerous lights form

into a shape like a "Z" or a "2". Many said the lights had smoke coming from them, like flares. The coastguards began to investigate, thinking perhaps the witnesses had seen meteorites.

This morning (11 July), statements were issued on many British television and radio stations from the Ministry of Defence who explained the sightings as meteorites breaking up. A coastguard spokesman said the events remained a mystery, and commented jokingly, "The truth is out there".

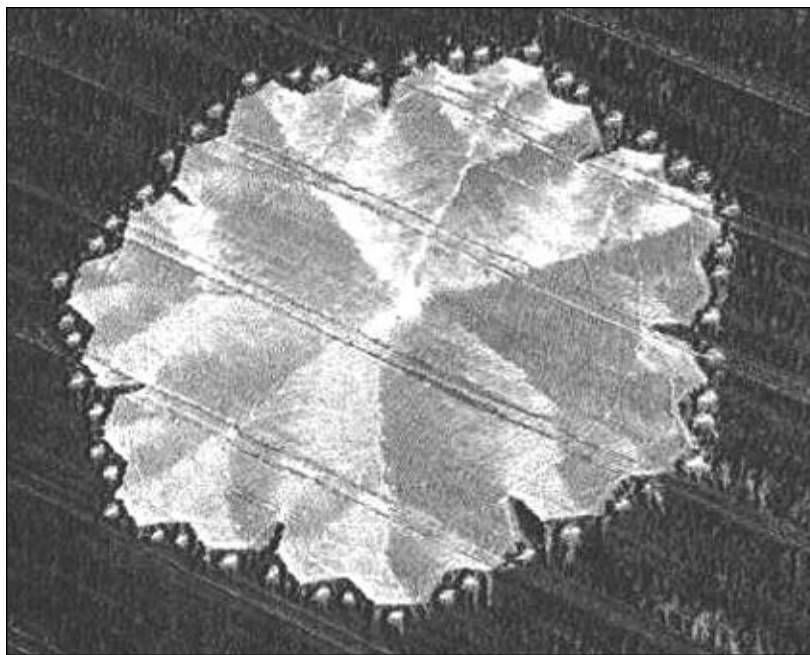
A new major crop formation appeared on the night of 9–10 July at West Woods, north of Alton Barnes. Numerous people (some of whom I have also interviewed) said they witnessed flashes of light coming from the area concerned. The British Met Office said there was no lightning in southern England at that time.

Note: Colin Andrews can be contacted at CPR International, PO Box 3378, Branford CT 06405-1978, USA.

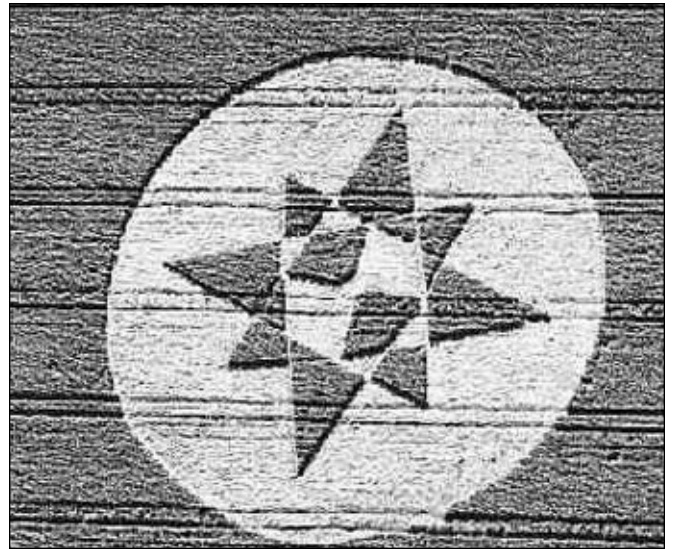
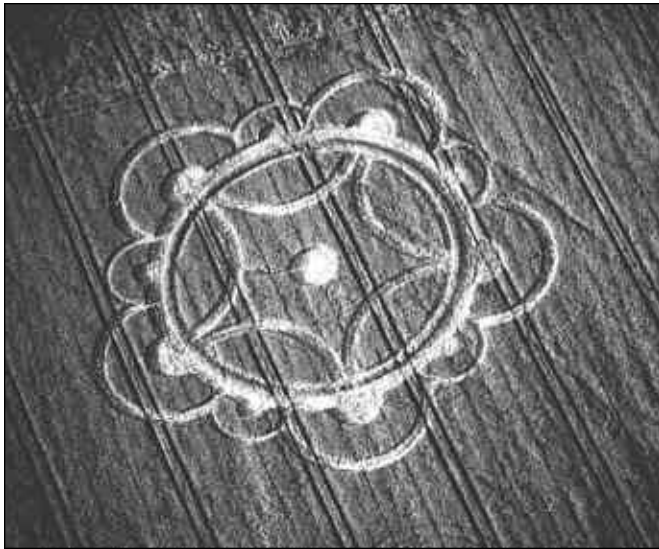
To obtain more details on the photographs presented in these pages, send SAE to photographers:

Steve Alexander, 27 St Francis Road, Gosport, Hants PO12 2UG, UK; tel +44 (0)1705 352867.

Lucy Pringle, 5 Town Lane, Sheet, Petersfield, Hants GU32 2AF, UK; tel/fax +44 (0)1730 263454.



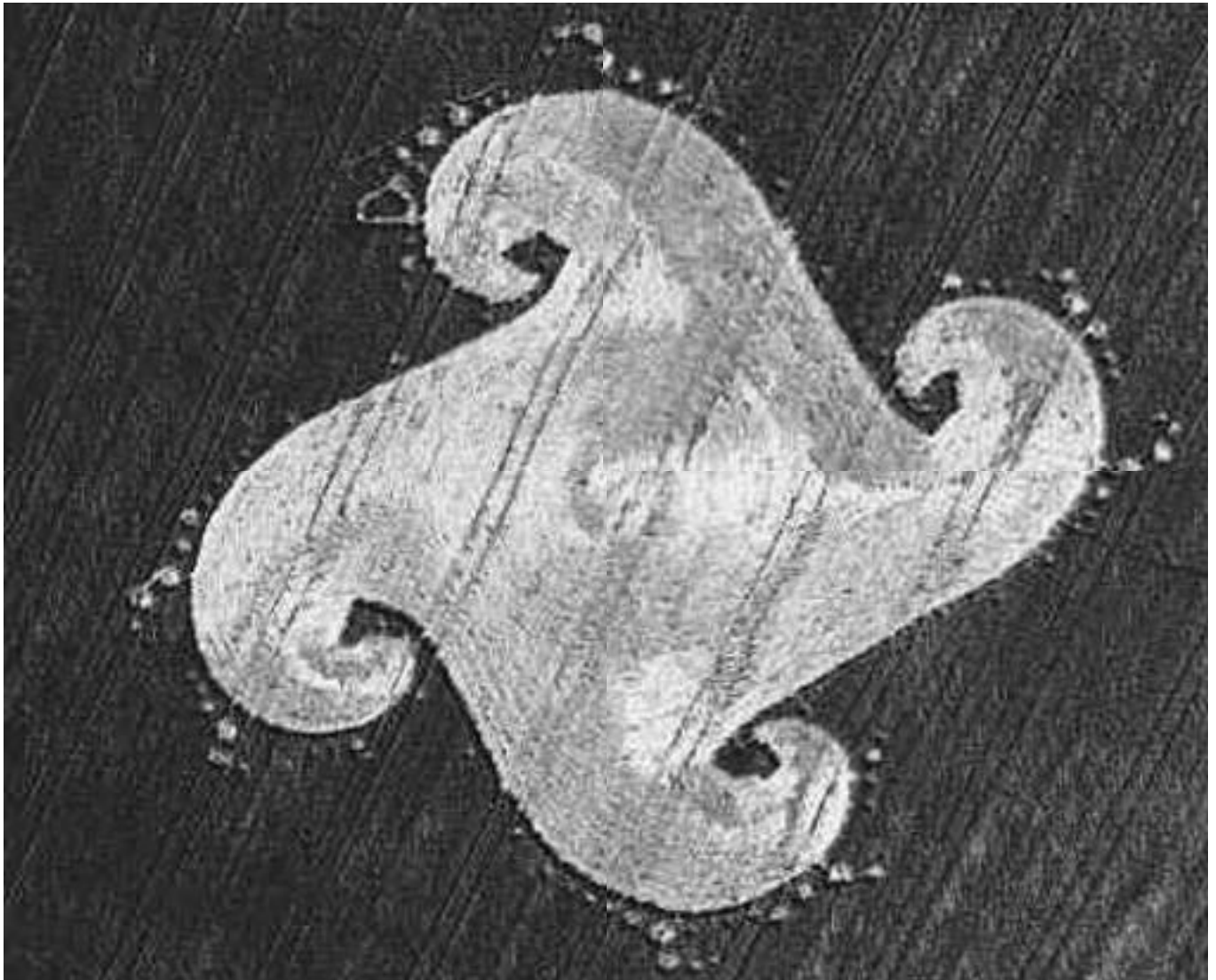
East Field, Alton Barnes, Wiltshire. Formed 9 July. Sevenfold Snowflake: a 295-foot formation surrounded by 147 little circles. Photograph © 1998 Steve Alexander.

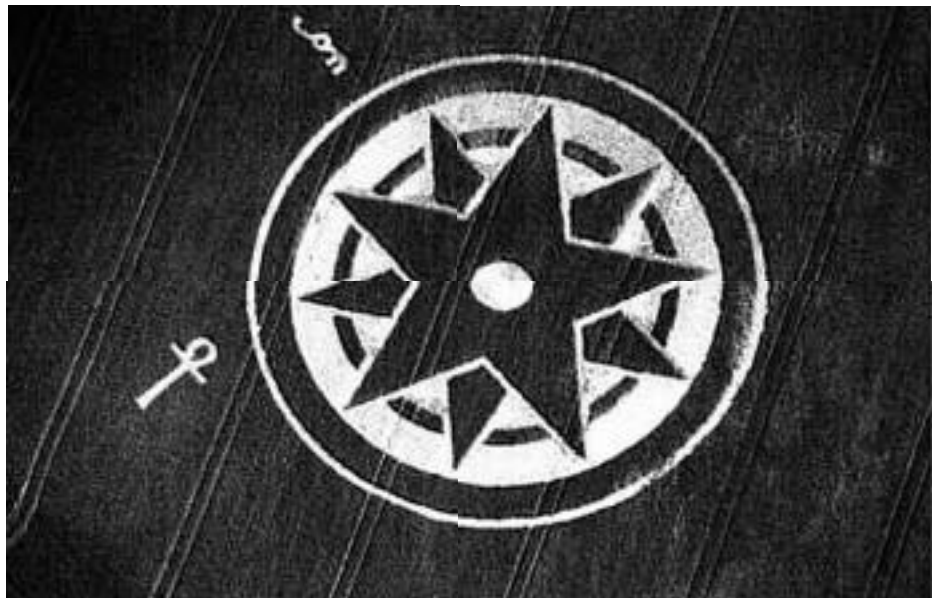
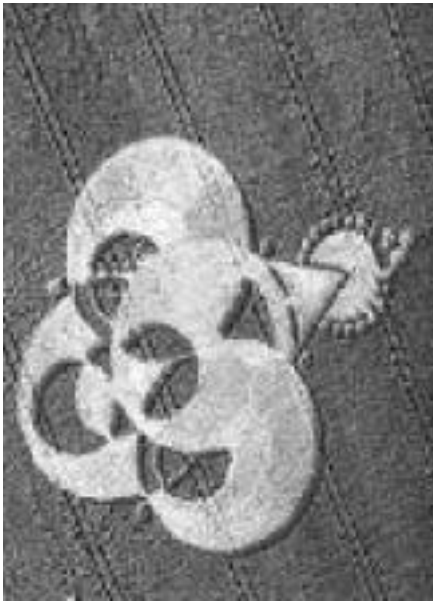


Top left: Fareham, near Portsmouth, Hampshire. Reported 11 July. Photograph © 1998 Steve Alexander.

Top right: Avebury, near Marlborough, Wiltshire. Reported 24 August. Photograph © 1998 Lucy Pringle.

Below: Silbury Hill, near Avebury, Wiltshire. Reported 23 July. A four-armed Julia Set, over 200 feet across, in wheat. Photograph © 1998 Lucy Pringle.





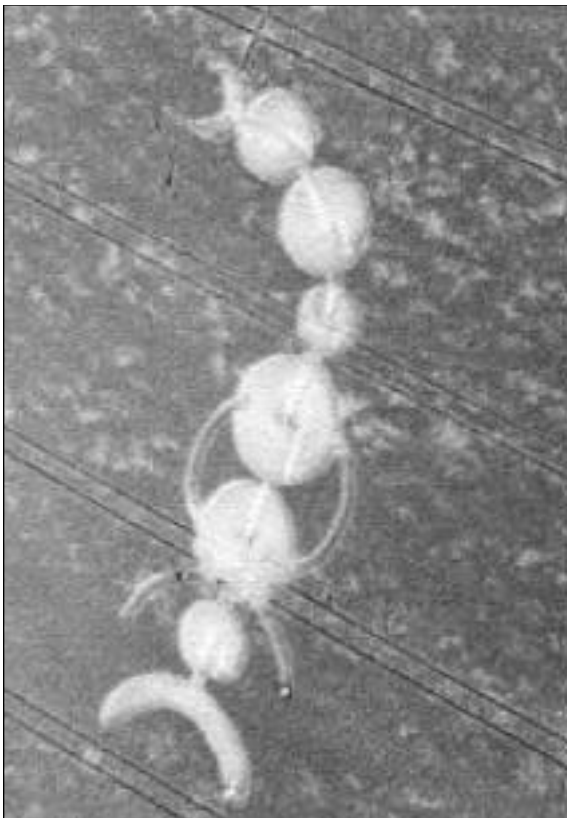
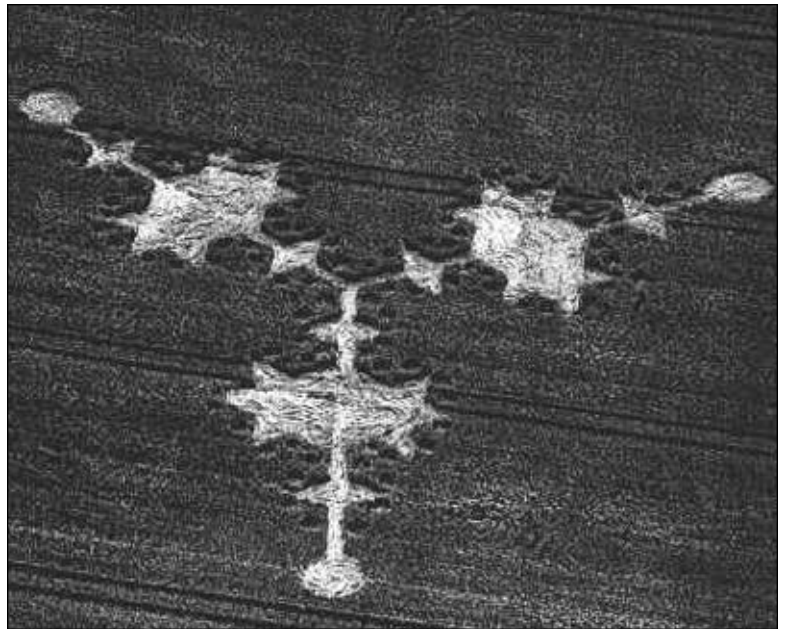
Top left: Lockeridge, near Avebury, Wiltshire. A 400-foot formation in wheat. Reported 6 August. Photograph © 1998 Lucy Pringle.

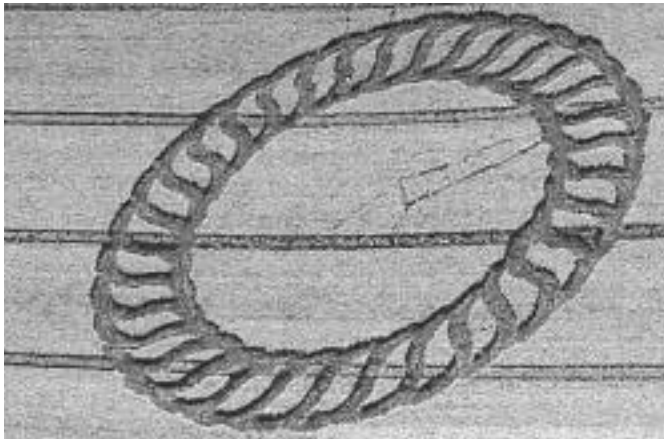
Top right: Dadford, near Silverstone, Buckinghamshire. A 190-foot-diameter design in wheat. Reported 4 July. Photograph © 1998 Steve Alexander.

Middle right: Hackpen Hill, near Broad Hinton, Wiltshire. Reported 17 August. This formation is about 150 feet from corner to corner. Photograph © 1998 Steve Alexander.

Bottom left: Lockeridge, near West Overton, Wiltshire. A 200-foot-long formation in barley. Reported 25 May 1998. Photograph © 1998 Lucy Pringle.

Bottom right: West Woods, Lockeridge, near Avebury, Wiltshire. Reported 10 July. Photograph © 1998 Steve Alexander.





Top left: West Kennett Longbarrow, Near Avebury, Wiltshire. Reported Monday 4 May. Diameter 140 feet. Photograph © 1998 Lucy Pringle.

Centre left (top): A 200-foot formation in wheat, reported 8 August. Photograph © 1998 Steve Alexander.

Centre left (bottom): This 300-foot formation appeared 19 August near Avebury "Sanctuary", Wiltshire. Photograph © 1998 Steve Alexander.

Bottom left: A 160-foot formation arrived near Danebury Ring Hill fort, reported 2 August. Photograph © 1998 Steve Alexander.

Below: Photograph © 1998 Lucy Pringle. This 300-foot wheat formation arrived next to Tawsmead Copse in West Stowell, Wiltshire, on 9 August.

Middle right: Yatesbury, near Avebury, Wiltshire. Reported 10 August. Photograph © 1998 Steve Alexander.

Bottom right: Windmill Hill, near Petersfield, Hampshire. Reported 10 July. Photograph © 1998 Lucy Pringle.

